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AESTHETIC EDUCATION PROGRAM AT THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY. REPORT ON THE PLANNING PHASE.

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THE PURPOSE OF THE REPORT IS--(1) TO PRESENT A RATIONALE AND A PLAN OF ACTION FOR A LONG-TERM PROGRAM OF RESEARCH AND CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT FOR AESTHETIC EDUCATION IN THE CONTEXT OF GENERAL EDUCATION, (2) TO IDENTIFY THE DECISIONS INVOLVED IN DEVELOPING CURRICULA FOR AESTHETIC EDUCATION, (3) TO REFLECT THE ISSUES, PROBLEMS, AND IMPLICATIONS CENTERING ABOUT THESE DECISIONS, AND (4) TO OFFER PROPOSALS FOR CHOICE AND ACTION. THE REPORT CONTAINS THE FOLLOWING MATERIAL--(1) BACKGROUND OF THE AESTHETIC EDUCATION PROGRAM, (2) THE CONCEPTS OF AESTHETIC EDUCATION, (3) PURPOSES OF THE AESTHETIC EDUCATION PROGRAM, (4) IMPLICATIONS OF AESTHETIC EXPERIENCE AND CONTENT, (5) ALTERNATE CONCEPTIONS OF CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT FOR AESTHETIC EDUCATION, AND (6) A PROPOSED COURSE OF ACTION FOR RESEARCH AND CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES. ALL THE MATERIAL IN THE REPORT WAS GLEANED FROM INTERVIEWS AND CORRESPONDENCE WITH RESOURCE PEOPLE IN THE ARTS AND EDUCATION, FROM RECENT LITERATURE IN THE FIELD, AND FROM SUGGESTIONS RECEIVED FROM MEMBERS OF THE ORIGINAL REFERENCE GROUP (THOSE IN ATTENDANCE AT THE CONFERENCE ON AESTHETIC EDUCATION HELD IN 1967). (RD)

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AESTHETIC EDUCATION PROGRAM
at The Ohio State University

Report on the Planning Phase

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A Project of CEMREL
Central Midwestern
Regional
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INTRODUCTION

Origin and Intent of the Aesthetic Education Program

The Aesthetic Education Program is a project of CEMREL, the Central Midwestern Regional Educational Laboratory. It is being coordinated by a small staff at The Ohio State University.

This report presents a rationale and a plan of action for a long term program of research and curriculum development for aesthetic education in the context of general education. Both the rationale and plan reflect the work accomplished during the spring and summer of 1967.

The general directions for this program were charted initially at the Conference on Aesthetic Education held at the Whitney Museum of American Art on January 20 and 21, 1967 under the auspices of the U.S. Office of Education. The scholars, educators, and researchers in attendance pledged their willingness to serve as a reference group,[1] and Manuel Barkan was selected as director.

At the outset, this group recognized the need for systematic and coordinated curriculum development research. The dearth of such efforts and the paucity of support for them was emphasized. It was recognized that the talents necessary to pursue a program of research and curriculum development for aesthetic education are located in institutions and agencies over the country. In view of this, the reference group agreed that the planning and development work should include extensive consultation, and that any plan for

research and curriculum development for aesthetic education should facilitate the involvement of various people, institutions, and agencies.

The information used in this report has been gleaned from interviews and correspondence with resource people[2] in the arts and in education, from recent literature, and from suggestions received from members of the original reference group. At the invitation of CEMREL, a preliminary draft of this report was also reviewed by a panel composed of substantive specialists in the arts, educational philosophers, curriculum specialists, and representatives from the U.S. Office of Education.[3]

The organization of fact, reasoned arguments, criticisms, and opinions thus acquired has been guided by the belief that curriculum development in all of the arts is essential to the improvement of instruction for aesthetic education in the context of general education. In accordance with this view, decisions made about what to teach, toward what ends, and in what forms are fundamental to other relevant issues pertaining to teacher education, facilities, time, and community resources for aesthetic education. Hence, this report identifies points at which key decisions need to be made in order to develop curricula for aesthetic education. Furthermore, it attempts to reflect issues and problems upon which these decisions would hinge, to illustrate some of their implications for curriculum making, and to offer proposals for choice and action.

Part I seeks to clarify the concept of aesthetic education and to locate it within the context of general education in a democratic society. It draws attention to the role that aesthetic education

can play in fulfilling the national goal of transforming the quality of social life. In doing so, it recognized the intimate relationships among the arts and the humanities, while differentiating between the two insofar as they tend to emphasize aesthetic qualities in experience. Some of the philosophical issues which bear on the scope and functions of the Aesthetic Education Program are discussed. Part I also describes some conditions which are handicapping current efforts to provide adequate aesthetic education.

Part II is addressed to problems of choice and decision about the fundamental purposes of the Aesthetic Education Program. By taking into account the potential functions of the program and their implications, it proposes the conditions under which curriculum development should be the major purpose of the program.

Part III focuses on problems for curriculum development which arise from differing conceptions of aesthetic experience. It traces some of the implications of these alternative views for the selection and organization of curriculum content and approaches to study for aesthetic education.

Part IV identifies some of the problems inherent in two polar conceptions of the forms that curricula should take and the functions they should serve. It describes research and development work that would partake of each of these conceptions in order to achieve a viable curriculum framework for aesthetic education.

Part V proposes a conception of curriculum development for aesthetic education. The structure demonstrates how alternative curricula might be developed--curricula which are at once responsible to the substantive and qualitative aspects of the arts and compatible

with relevant facts provided by behavioral scientists. It proposes guidelines for a long term program of research and curriculum development in the Aesthetic Education Program.

Part VI proposes an initial plan of action for research and curriculum development for aesthetic education within the guidelines. It describes major tasks and the functions they would serve within a long term program.

PART I

A Conception of Aesthetic Education in General Education

The Aesthetic Education Program should be conceived as a means to enhance aesthetic experience by improving the quality of instruction in the arts in the context of general education. The scope of interests and the educational concerns of the program should be determined in the light of relationships between the arts and the humanities and the consequent role of aesthetic education in general education.

At the outset, it is important to recognize the intimate relationships among the arts and humanities. Both are concerned with the meaning and quality of experience in life. Both are addressed to a study of the values that life has to offer and the range of consequences that may follow from choices among these values. However, the humanities attend primarily to problems of meaning; they are concerned with ways of life--their histories, cultures, philosophies, and their arts. They emphasize the pervasive ethical problems that man confronts and illustrate the various guises under which these problems may appear. The humanities offer models of thought and action for study and invite the learner to determine their relevance to his own conduct. The humanities view the arts as essential data about ways of life. To this extent the humanities encompass the arts.

Particular functions for aesthetic education arise from the

distinctive character of the arts in human experience. The arts are means through which people intentionally give order to qualities of sense and form so that aspects of their life are infused with expressive meanings. The aesthetic experience, therefore, occurs either in the course of apprehending meaning in qualities of sense and form or in utilizing these qualities to give shape to an aspect of experience.

In our time and culture, the need for aesthetic education is nowhere more evident than in the bizarre images, sounds, and actions which are thrust upon us simply to win our attention, often at the expense of our sensibilities. Although shock treatment can occasionally modify customary habits of thought and action, more subtle meanings can be no less powerful in shaping our feelings and images of life. It is significant that The Report of the President's Commission on National Goals expresses a concern for the extent to which contemporary patterns of life are being conditioned by appeals and pressures of which people are scarcely conscious.[4]

Although aesthetic education can offer no panacea for these tendencies, a concern for aesthetic values in general education can have a direct bearing on the quality of American life in the future. Aesthetic problems are present in personal and social life whenever there are choices to be made among forms that will serve as vehicles for meaning. If, for example, one chooses to construct a building on the single criterion of minimum cost, that decision does not merely pre-empt possibilities for the form of the building. It also forecloses some of the meanings that the building might have infused into the life of the community. If it is apparent that economic,

political, and social decisions have aesthetic consequences, then it becomes obvious that decisions about aesthetic problems have moral implications. Hence, the arts and humanities are like two sides of a coin. The humanities propose models of thought and action for study. The arts teach us wherein their meanings reside and are experienced. The humanities attend to ways that life can be perceived and imagined.[5] All of the arts exemplify the sensibility, expertise, and imagination that each generation brings to the never-ending task of recreating the human environment.

In the context of general education, aesthetic education is not addressed to pre-professional and professional training in the arts. The purpose of general education is to achieve "the qualities of rationality, ethicality, and reward throughout all non-specialized aspects of one's life to the extent possible."[6] General education is appropriate for every person because it influences "the quality of one's decisions as he interacts with the objects and events that make up his world."[7] Therefore, approaches to teaching and learning contribute to general education when they enhance the degree to which a person has command of his decisions. Similarly, instructional content for general education enhances the quality of a person's decisions and his execution of them when it provides him with usable concepts of objects, processes, circumstances, and relationships among them.

When viewed within the context of general education, aesthetic education should help people attend to their inner feelings as they perceive objects and events in their environment. Aesthetic education should indeed elucidate and mature the quest for meaning in

life. It should foster the attitudes and skills that enable people to create images and forms which embody the nuances of the meanings they apprehend. Therefore, aesthetic education should be neither passive nor remote for the practical affairs of daily life. To the extent that it remains passive, it fails to contribute to general education because it fails to influence those decisions and actions upon which the style and quality of personal life most immediately depend. In order to reshape and refine the quality of personal and social life, aesthetic education should develop the abilities to make justifiable judgments and to take responsible action in the face of aesthetic problems. Without these abilities, the enjoyment of aesthetic experience is likely to be superficial, the value ascribed to it but meager, and the search for it short-lived.

For too long, the benefits of aesthetic education have been regarded either as "elite" knowledge accessible and relevant only to a privileged group, or viewed as the product of experiences that are too precious to be nurtured in the schools. Because aesthetic experience derives from a quality of engagement between a person and some object or event, there are those who would even say that it cannot be taught. It simply has to be experienced. Nevertheless, the meaning in aesthetic experience derives both from a person's apprehension of qualities of sense, form, and expression, and the meaning he is able to create. Given this view, part of the educational task is to enhance capacities for discrimination, interpretation, and evaluation of those sensuous, formal, and expressive qualities from which aesthetic meaning can be derived.

In addition to cultivating an awareness of feeling-tones so that

raw experience can be given form and infused with meaning, aesthetic education should also function to maintain and transform the culture. These cultural functions of the arts arise from the desire to embody values and beliefs in rituals, ceremonies, symbols, and concrete objects. In their various manifestations, the arts serve to induct new generations into patterns of belief, bring into concert the actions of people, and challenge the status quo. An understanding of the role that such forms can play in shaping public awareness, choice, and action is a requisite condition for making informed judgments about their significance and value. Hence, aesthetic education should nurture inquiry into the forms through which personal, community, and national goals and beliefs find expression. From such inquiry more knowledgeable and appropriate decisions can be made about forms that should be cherished and preserved and those which should be challenged and reconstructed.

Traditionally, the personal and cultural functions of the arts have been studied through: 1) the visual arts: painting, drawing, graphics, sculpture, and architecture, 2) the performing arts: dance, theater, music, and opera, and 3) the literary arts: prose and poetry. Of late, some who are concerned with aesthetic education are seeking to extend its limits to all manner of aesthetic forms within the environment--from sticks and stones to TV commercials--with considerable emphasis upon film, city planning, and leisure time activities.

The presence of these more traditional and extended views of the scope of the arts demonstrates that there are alternative and competing theories about the sources for aesthetic experience and

significance. If this fact has baffled both creators and performers, the absence of a unified theory has also plagued aestheticians, critics, and educators. That dance, literature, music, theatre arts, and the visual arts have complex natures is axiomatic and hardly bears repetition. That these living art forms are open systems--and that qualities of individual works of art are unpredictable and unforseeable--is being hammered home with regularity by the creative productivity of dancers, writers, musicians, dramatists, and artists.

In a sense, the creators and performers need no theories. Their primary work consists in making and doing. Their creative work does not require them to explain what they do or to propose criteria for judging their efforts. But others who are also concerned with inquiry in the arts--aestheticians, critics, historians, and educators--find that their work cannot proceed in the absence of theory. One of the tasks of aestheticians is to see if they can offer conceptual accounts of the qualities found in various artistic makings and doings. The efforts of the critic hinge on generating and applying appropriate criteria to particular works of art. The historian, even the one who restricts his task to description, follows a particular view of empiricism. Obviously, the educator simply cannot avoid theory if he is to be responsible to the respective models of these various approaches to study in the arts. However, the paucity of educational theory adequate to the task is an impediment of major proportions.

Current efforts to provide aesthetic education in the schools are handicapped by meager understanding of its potential contribution to the enrichment of personal and social life in American

society. Most curricula are inadequate for making such a contribution. Though instruction in literature, music, and the visual arts are offered in most schools, the theatre arts in many, and the dance in some, the typical outcomes of instruction hardly suggest that students have had a significant involvement in aesthetic inquiry.

There are a number of reasons why these conditions exist. For the most part, curriculum goals have been defined either ambiguously or in the context of pre-professional training rather than general education. Behavioral characteristics which pertain to aesthetic discrimination, judgment, and the derivation of meaning from aesthetic experience are poorly identified. Consequently, the content for instruction at the various educational levels has been differentiated either arbitrarily or not at all. The special needs of pupils from various socio-economic strata in the society have attracted scant attention. In general, instruction is out of touch with contemporary developments in the literary, performing, and visual arts.

Too often, fuzzy thinking is the earmark of many recent well intentioned efforts to combine instruction in the several arts within a humanities context. Theoretical support for curriculum decisions is generally either weak, or it is given from comparatively parochial points of view. Consequently, the aesthetic aspects of the arts are rarely experienced. More often the arts are used merely to illustrate moral issues and dilemmas of life. The significance of the sensuous, formal, and expressive qualities of the art forms through which such issues are apprehended tends to be neglected. When the subtleties in these issues are lost, much of the power in their meaning is also lost. It is small wonder, then, that one

encounters ambiguities, troublesome contradictions, and all too many discontinuities between ends and means in so many curriculum guides purporting to provide instruction for aspects of aesthetic education.

The problems of implementing aesthetic education in the schools are also caught up in the problems of society at large. According to a National Education Association Research Division study, the hard fact remains that "efforts to learn to sing or paint," act and dance "are considered by many to be educational frills"[8]--not to mention efforts to criticize, discriminate, and reflect upon aesthetic experience. This prevailing attitude is as much an indictment of the limited effect of current programs in the fields of aesthetic education as it is an indication of the limited perspective from which such attitudes are derived. While the arts themselves appear to be flourishing, it is doubtful whether their impact on individual lives is as powerful and meaningful as it could be or, indeed, ought to be. It is no idle claim to suggest that aesthetic education is currently so limited as to be incapable of supporting the cultural renaissance envisioned by President Kennedy and being sought by President Johnson. Clearly, a renaissance will be incomplete despite all the benefits science and scientific education can bestow; incomplete, that is, until a basic aesthetic education is provided for all Americans in the schools of the nation.

When general education is perceived as education for the majority within the democratic ethic, then its modes of inquiry--the acquisition of knowledge, the development of powers of discrimination and judgment, the refinement of attitudes and patterns of thought

and action--should be addressed to all the major domains of human experience, including the arts. Because general education is committed to the personal development of all students, aesthetic education should not be conceived as a means to cultivate a singular model of taste and judgment in the arts. Rather, it is education of the sensibilities and capacities for judgment and effective action so that aesthetic experience can be enjoyed to the limits of each person's capacity.

The Aesthetic Education Program should proceed with the full realization that alternative curricula can and ought to be devised to meet these general goals. It should utilize the various talents and resources of people and agencies so that more studious and carefully conceived approaches to aesthetic education can be provided by schools. To do so, it should focus on the difficult task of extending and refining theory, and systematically building and testing curricula that are consistent with the unique contributions that aesthetic education should make to general education--curricula which are at once responsible to the substantive and qualitative aspects of the arts, compatible with relevant facts provided by behavioral scientists, and in keeping with the democratic ethic.

PART II

The Core of the Aesthetic Education Program

There are many actions which the Aesthetic Education Program might take to strengthen instruction in all of the arts in order to improve aesthetic education. A major problem is to determine a point of focus for the program so that the interests, talents, and energies of various people can be marshalled to effect change. This section of the report identifies several points of focus that might be considered. It explains why curriculum development can best lead to educational change, why it can function well to coordinate the various activities which the program might encompass, and how it might serve to determine the perimeters of the program. It also identifies the conditions under which curriculum development for aesthetic education ought to proceed if it is to have theoretical and substantive integrity.

If one were to take the view that basic research is the well-spring and source of ideas that can lead to educational change, then the primary work of the Aesthetic Education Program should be oriented toward research. The program would initiate, support, and coordinate philosophical and empirical studies that appear relevant to aesthetic education. However, in order for such research to serve as the means to coordinate the activities and to determine the perimeters of the program, the potential relevance of proposed studies to aesthetic education would need to be evaluated. Such an

evaluation would be difficult, if not impossible, to make without recourse to some prior conceptions of goals, content, and methods for aesthetic education. On these terms, any philosophical and empirical research included in the program would seek only to re-examine, redefine, and extend some assumed set of goals, content, and methods for aesthetic education.

It is important to recognize at this point that the act of formulating goals, content, and methods is, in itself, the first step in curriculum development. It is a step which should be grounded in philosophical and empirical knowledge, but it does not involve the conduct of philosophical or empirical research per se. Since both curriculum development and philosophical and empirical research into curriculum problems entail considerations of goals, content, and methods, the question of determining whether research or curriculum development would serve best as the focus for the Aesthetic Education Program hinges on what is taken to be the fundamental goal of the program itself.

If the fundamental goal of the program were taken to be the re-examination of assumptions and the extension of wisdom, then this goal could be served best through coordinated philosophical and empirical research. Only that degree of curriculum development considered necessary for the study or identification of problems in a social and educational setting would be included. However, if educational change were seen as the fundamental goal, then the program should focus on curriculum development. Philosophical and empirical research activities would serve the essential functions of re-examining, refining, and extending the assumed bases for the

work undertaken to develop curricula. Indeed, philosophical and empirical research would serve both as conscience and illuminator of defects and problems encountered in the processes of curriculum development.

A substantially comparable set of arguments could be developed if one were to propose that teacher education should be the focus for the Aesthetic Education Program. Teacher education surely has a bearing, and it is difficult to conceive of the absence of teacher education activities from the program. Yet, it seems rather obvious that some assumed set of goals for aesthetic education would be essential if teacher education were to coordinate the activities and define the perimeters of the program. Any consideration of the background and skills that teachers require inevitably leads one back to curriculum development as a prior condition for determining what teachers ought to learn and toward what ends they ought to direct their efforts.

Curriculum problems are at the heart of educational change and improvement because the curriculum functions as the bridge between the student, the teacher, and the disciplines--the domains of human experience--in which students are to be educated. Curriculum development requires one to make judgments and decisions about what is worth studying, why, and through what kinds of situations and experiences learning should be nurtured. As the focus for the program, curriculum development would provide the general guidelines for determining the perimeters and priorities among relevant activities and studies.

Whether one views curriculum as a proposed course of study, as

a description of goals and possible learning tasks for students, or as a set of desirable educational experiences, there are three essential considerations in planning curricula. First, content for instruction must be identified; second, approaches to study must be clarified; and third, behavioral objectives in relation to the content and approaches to study must be specified. Decisions made in relation to each of these factors implicitly define the scope and emphasis for curricula that may be developed. Insofar as aesthetic education is concerned, such decisions need to be made with care because they can determine the images of the arts--the qualities of objects and events and points of view toward them--that a curriculum is likely to promote. The knowledge, choices, and actions the curriculum may embrace can also influence the values students come to ascribe to aesthetic experience in their own lives.

In the light of these issues and arguments, the remainder of this report assumes that curriculum development should be at the core of the Aesthetic Education Program. It sets forth conditions which are required for effective curriculum development for aesthetic education and proposes that these conditions should determine the other activities in the program, their functions, and the points of coordination among them.

Condition 1. Curriculum development for aesthetic education should proceed in the light of alternative conceptions about the nature of the aesthetic object, performance, or event, the aesthetic experience, the process of creation, and the varieties of criticism in the several arts. One of the most pervasive characteristics of any humanistic subject matter is the multiplicity of values and

points of view it has generated throughout the history of man. In order to cohere with this tradition, to extend it, and to cause it to function as a tool with which to enhance the experiences of creating and perceiving works of art, curricula should reflect this multiplicity. At minimum, the curriculum maker should not deliberately ignore or fail to offer reasons for rejecting any of the major alternative viewpoints about aesthetic experience as bases for curriculum development. The writings of artists, performers, aestheticians, critics, and historians in the arts provide clues about aesthetic experience that can serve as guidelines for curriculum development, and help to insure sound theoretical bases for it.

In order to make this condition operable within the Aesthetic Education Program, curriculum makers will require the assistance of aestheticians, critics, and historians of the arts who can provide analytical descriptions of alternative viewpoints about modes of entry into the aesthetic experience and sources of artistic significance. Such descriptions are among the raw materials out of which the curriculum maker can develop learning problems for aesthetic education and around which he can organize content for instruction. For example, if the curriculum maker were to take Langer seriously when she identifies the apprehension of non-discursive meaning as the mode of aesthetic experience, then items of content and approaches to study which could enable a student to make distinctions between discursive and non-discursive meanings would become candidates for inclusion in the curriculum. Indeed, this conception of aesthetic experience, among others would be used as a control to identify a repertory of concepts and illustrative content that

might be included in a curriculum.

Aestheticians, critics, and historians of the several arts can best serve the Aesthetic Education Program as resource people at the outset of a curriculum development project. They can also provide valuable criticisms of the substantive aspects of a proposed curriculum prior to its implementation. Early in the curriculum development process, such resource people should direct the curriculum maker to sources which could extend his vision of the modes of aesthetic experience. Prior to implementing the curriculum, they should review the work of the curriculum maker to examine the character and quality of the options for aesthetic experience which the curriculum proposes to offer to students. These consultants should not be expected to show how these options for aesthetic experience could be translated into forms that are appropriate for students, nor should they be called upon to suggest teaching methods for aesthetic education. Such decisions are the responsibility of educators whose backgrounds of knowledge and skills equip them to fashion curricula for a variety of learners and educational settings.

In the light of this discussion, the on-going work of aestheticians, critics, and historians would be outside of the perimeters of the Aesthetic Education Program. High priority would be given to the services they can provide as resource people and as critics of the philosophical and substantive bases of the curriculum proposals.

Condition 2. Content and approaches to study for curricula for aesthetic education should reflect a range of ideas, methods, and techniques that members of the artistic communities employ in the

conduct of their work. In other words, whatever is taught under the banner of aesthetic education should have both substantive and methodological integrity. The variety of objects, events, processes, and circumstances which sustain and give focus to inquiry and practice in the several arts should be sources of content and approaches to study for curricula in aesthetic education.

In order to identify content and approaches to study, the curriculum maker needs access to analytical descriptions of current and historically significant practices of members of the artistic communities including, among others, artists, performers, composers, directors, critics, historians, and patrons and citizens who support the arts. Such descriptions can be developed in a number of ways. They can be abstracted from writings and synthesized from consultation with such practitioners in the artistic communities. These descriptions would comprise a repertory of items of content illustrating practice and performance in the arts from which selections might be made for a given curriculum. The relevance of particular items of content to a given curriculum would depend upon prior decisions about the modes of aesthetic experience which would be presented. Return to the example suggested under Condition 1 and the decisions it would have dictated at that level. If Langer's conception of aesthetic experience had been selected as one approach to the arts, then the curriculum maker would select items of content to illustrate concepts of non-discursive meaning and those approaches to study most likely to have an impact on students with a particular background of experience and understanding.

On these terms, the selection of curriculum content and

approaches to study would be governed by conceptions of aesthetic experience. The range of practices and characteristics of performers in the several arts would serve as illustrative material to provide a point of entry into that mode of aesthetic experience. For example, if a student were unable to perceive differences in color as differences in light and dark, it is not likely that he would be able to apprehend the non-discursive significance of chiaroscuro as a source of expressive meaning in painting. On the other hand, he might be able to apprehend non-discursive meaning insofar as it is conveyed through other qualities such as line or position of parts.

Conceptions of aesthetic experience can be seen as alternative prescriptions of the general conditions under which an experience should be regarded as "aesthetic." They are, therefore, open to criticism and subject to review in the light of their appropriateness and comprehensiveness. Specific ideas, methods, and techniques employed by members of the artistic community not only show the variety of ways that these conditions might be fulfilled but also provide the points of entry into aesthetic experience. In giving attention to such a repertory of specific ideas, methods, and techniques the curriculum maker tends to insure that components of the curriculum will have substantive and methodological integrity. In the same way, his attention to aesthetic theory tends to insure that alternative conceptions of the mode of aesthetic experience become candidates for inclusion in curricula.

The activities of the professional communities, therefore, would provide some of the raw materials required in curriculum

development. Members of the artistic community would function as resource people in the initial stages of curriculum development and high priority would be placed on access to them or to their products in implementing curricula. Like the aestheticians, critics, and historians, the members of the artistic communities would not be called upon to suggest content and approaches to study for students.

Condition 3. Curriculum development should proceed in the light of alternative conceptions of the forms of behavior that education should nurture. Judgments about how the student ought to be treated and toward what ends affect the ways curricula are conceived and the forms they take.

Toward this end, curriculum makers need to be attentive to what educational philosophers and social critics would have to say about varied cultural values and conditions which may influence curriculum development. Educational philosophers and social critics should help curriculum makers become aware of the values implied in the logical and practical consequences of their decisions to nurture certain patterns of behavior over others. They should point out disparities between the educational means and ends that are being proposed and the models for thought and action that are being cultivated in the social milieu. They should help the curriculum maker to understand the assumptions implicit in the way curricula are conceived and the forms that they take.

In terms of the Aesthetic Education Program, educational philosophers and social critics should act as resource people in the initial conceptual stages of a curriculum development project to insure that such philosophical issues are being given explicit

consideration. They should act as critics of the proposed curriculum prior to its implementation and serve as evaluators of curriculum outcomes.

Condition 4. Curriculum development should proceed in the light of research in the social and behavioral sciences which is relevant to aesthetic education. If the fund of knowledge required to make a particular curricular decision is inadequate, then research which might produce such fundamental knowledge should be initiated and supported. Insofar as behavioral research is a tool for evaluation, it should also become an integral part of the assessment activities for any curriculum.

Within the Aesthetic Education Program, research in the social and behavioral sciences should be supported to the extent that it is conceived in relation to a specific curricular problem. If, for example, the curriculum maker had no basis for determining factors that influence students' perceptions of the size, shape, and position of objects, then the development of teaching materials and methods to nurture these perceptual skills would have to proceed by trial and error. Obviously, research could significantly increase the efficiency of such developments by identifying those factors over which teachers might exercise some control.

Although broad research programs of special interest to social and behavioral scientists are not likely to be immediately relevant to curriculum development, specific parts of such programs could be. Moreover, it is possible that the very process of systematic curriculum development for aesthetic education could stimulate important as well as relevant behavioral research.

Condition 5. Curriculum development for aesthetic education should proceed in the light of practical matters--the possibilities for scheduling, the availability of resources, and the particular skills and limitations of teachers and administrators. In order to generate imaginative solutions to problems posed in connection with the educational establishment, curriculum makers need access to a variety of specialists and channels for communication in order to effect change. Although there are differences in the strategies one might use to bring about change, there can be little doubt about the major factors which require systematic attention in the course of curriculum development.

New curricula make new demands upon teachers. Plans for teacher education should be projected in the light of current patterns of training and the types of skills and backgrounds of knowledge among experienced teachers.

Administrators need to be persuaded that both staffing and scheduling problems created by new curricula can be solved. Hence, the proposed curriculum needs to be conceived in relation to a particular block of school time and alternative possibilities for staffing and scheduling.

If new curricula are to have an impact upon a given school community, then support for their aims is required. Access to the resources of the school and the community is also essential. The involvement of a variety of people and agencies in the community in visible ways helps to generate the interest required for introducing and sustaining a curriculum that is newly adopted.

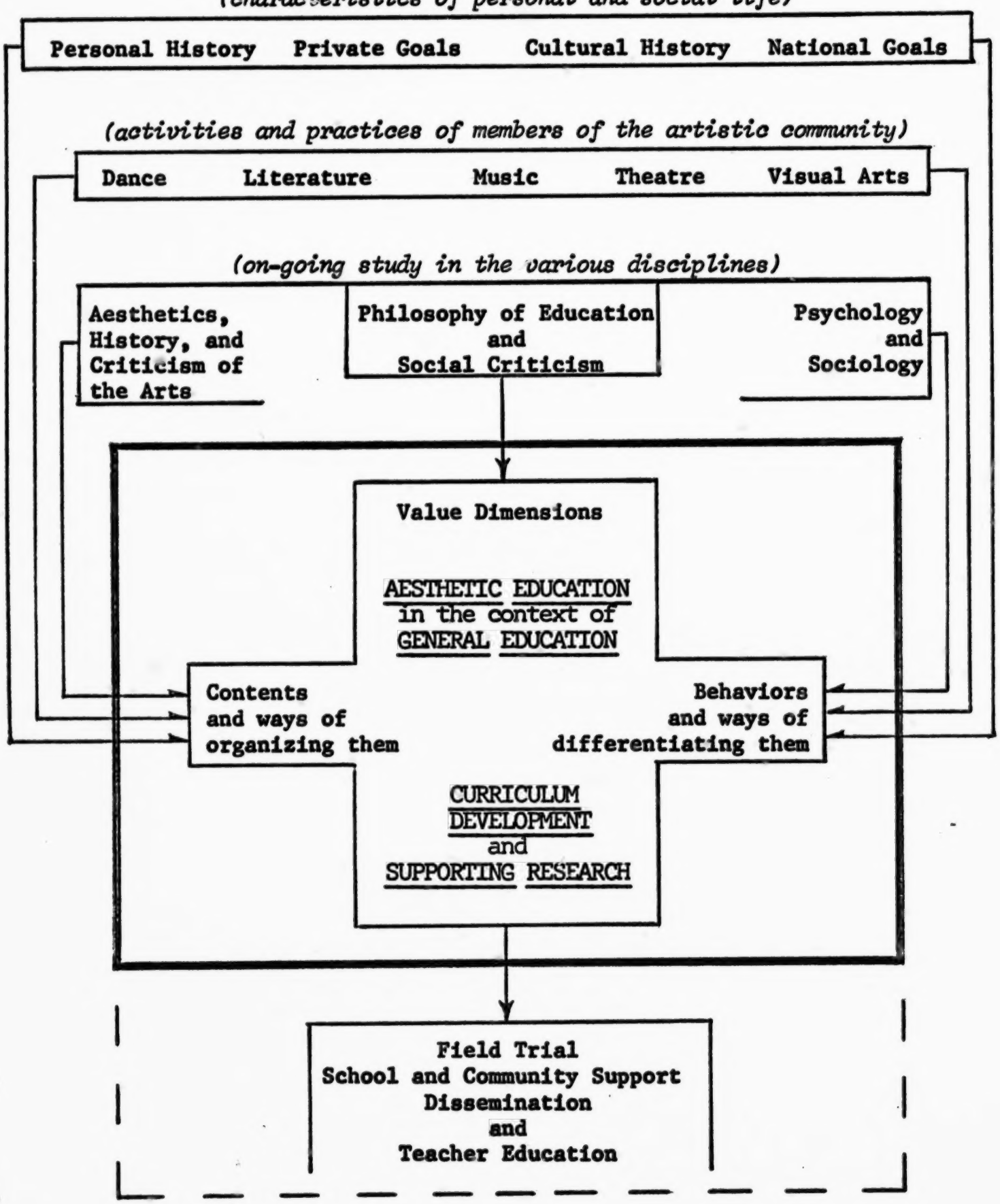
These several conditions are taken to be prerequisites for

defensible curriculum making in a democratic society. To the extent that any of them were to be neglected in a curriculum development program for aesthetic education, one would overlook an opportunity to give aesthetic education the theoretical, substantive, and ethical integrity it should have. Without such integrity, questions about feasibility are meaningless.

The variety of roles which have been suggested for the types of people who ought to be involved in curriculum development for aesthetic education have been projected from the demands created by a systematic process of building curricula. If it is obvious that the job is not for amateurs, it should also be obvious that few people are so knowledgeable in aesthetic, educational, and behavioral theory, the various arts, and the practical dimensions of schooling that they could create a curriculum single-handedly. Therefore, the interests, talents, and energies of a variety of people are required for educational change to be effected.

The following diagram summarizes relationships among on-going studies in the various disciplines, activities, and practices carried on by members of the artistic community, and the Aesthetic Education Program with curriculum development as a core.

PROPOSED RELATIONSHIPS AMONG ACTIVITIES
AND PERIMETERS OF
THE AESTHETIC EDUCATION PROGRAM



PART III

Implications of Conceptions of Aesthetic Experience, Content, and Approaches to Study for Aesthetic Education

The preceding section of this report identified several conditions under which curriculum development for aesthetic education ought to proceed. In a sense, these conditions force one to open several Pandora boxes in order to discover some of the issues and problems in each. This section is addressed to problems of curriculum development which arise from the presence of alternative conceptions of aesthetic experience (Part II, Condition 1, pp. 17-19). It discusses problems bearing on the selection of curriculum content in relation to conceptions of aesthetic experience. It also draws attention to the problems of identifying approaches to study for aesthetic education in the light of conceptions of the aesthetic experience and content.

Anyone who is in the least acquainted with aesthetic theory and the general problems of planning a curriculum knows that there is no direct way of translating aesthetic theory into a curriculum for teaching toward aesthetic experience. To achieve such a one-to-one relationship, the curriculum maker would need a theory of knowledge which would at once identify causes and conditions for aesthetic experience and explicate the consequences of them. To the extent that such causes, conditions, and consequences in experience could be

identified and to the extent that their educational consequences were considered worthwhile, one would be in a position to exercise full rational control over curriculum development. At the present time, however, there is no generally recognized theory about aesthetic knowing which could allow for this kind of control. Hence, the curriculum maker does not have a strictly logical and consistent basis which permits him to explicate relationships among such factors as:

1) modes of aesthetic response, which are referred to through such normative-empirical concepts as emotional communion, empathy, pleasure, sublimation, and contemplation;
2) characteristics of aesthetic objects and events--their particular sensuous, formal, technical, and expressive qualities--including the contexts in which they are apprehended, e.g. spatial-temporal, private-social, functional-nonfunctional; and
3) approaches to study and conditions that might lead to aesthetic response.

In the absence of an adequate general theory of aesthetic subject matters and modes of response, and in the effort to achieve a functional degree of rational control between educational means and ends in curricula which deal with aesthetic subject matters, the curriculum maker is forced to consider multiple relationships among these factors in instruction. Although the basis for choosing one set of relationships over another might be largely common-sensical, the factors themselves do warrant attention if for no reason than the fact that it would be difficult to conceive of curricula without

taking them into account.

The crux of the curriculum problem for aesthetic education is to select and organize content so that a variety of ways can be opened for students to partake of and assess aesthetic experience. Obviously, identifying and selecting conceptions of aesthetic experience are the first steps toward a solution of the curriculum problem. These decisions enable the curriculum maker to formulate goals for aesthetic education and to use them as controls for subsequent parts of the curriculum task. Further specification for the curriculum is achieved in a second step when selections of content are made. Content selections should illustrate and imbue the controlling concepts about aesthetic experience with the kind of substance and import that can build toward experiential meaning. The third step involves decisions among various approaches to study--ways of inquiring into aesthetic matters--so that guidelines for organizing the content selections can be suggested. Since decisions which are made at each of these three steps can determine both the form and emphasis of a curriculum, some of the options for choice merit further consideration.

Modes of Aesthetic Experience

The history of thought bearing on the arts, as reflected in the writings of historians, aestheticians, critics, artists, and performers is a rich source from which a number of conceptions of aesthetic experience can be derived. Aesthetic experience is usually characterized by describing properties of the object or event which occasions the experience, by identifying the pervasive quality of

the experience itself, or by explaining relationships between qualities of objects or events and one's responses to them. Conceptions of aesthetic experience also tend to differ both in the way and in the degree to which they attempt to prescribe qualities which ought to count as "aesthetic." Even those theories which attempt to be ethically neutral or to establish bases for their conceptions through empirical description either propose or depend upon some conception of what is taken to be relevant to the aesthetic experience. This is to say that the act of making a distinction is itself a preferential act.[9]

Since conceptions of aesthetic experience are normative, they suggest a range of values which might be entertained as curriculum goals. Hence, in the very act of deciding among the different conceptions of aesthetic experience, the curriculum maker is choosing values he will attempt to project and nurture through aesthetic education. When such values are recognized as the goals to be achieved through a curriculum, there remains the problem of deciding whether to include one conception of aesthetic experience or several of them.

For example, if a curriculum maker in music were to derive his curriculum goals from a single conception of aesthetic experience, he might decide that Meyer's theory of absolute expressive qualities in music <u>should</u> be regarded as the mode of aesthetic experience. The decision to develop a curriculum which consistently focuses on this particular conception could be quite deliberate. The curriculum maker, thereby, would be consciously rejecting other major conceptions in order to demonstrate that this single mode of aesthetic experience could be extended into a curriculum. He would also be able to assess

the degree to which that mode of experience had been realized through the curriculum.

In a certain sense, a curriculum based on a single conception of aesthetic experience could attain an internal consistency which might facilitate the assessment of a particular mode of aesthetic understanding while demonstrating the behavioral implications of that aesthetic position. It could achieve a kind of "cleanliness" and clarity of instruction and evaluation in relation to identified goals. However, the opportunity to teach students that there are other conceptions of aesthetic value would be sacrificed. Such an approach could have certain research advantages, but it would not serve the needs of aesthetic education in general education.

There are other significant conceptions of aesthetic value. Furthermore, there are a number of reasons why several conceptions of aesthetic experience should be used as the bases for developing any curriculum for aesthetic education.

The histories of all of the arts have occasioned the development of many conceptions of aesthetic value. Indeed, these histories demonstrate that aesthetic values, like human values themselves, have been and continue to be debatable, contestable, and open to reexamination. Furthermore, even a cursory examination of the history of criticism in the several arts would reveal the futility of searching for a universally appropriate criterion for determining the aesthetic significance of a mode of response, an object, or an approach to study which might lead to the aesthetic response. And if the substantive evidence itself is not sufficient to demonstrate the need for attending to various conceptions of aesthetic value, then the

need to preserve and extend a multiplicity of values in the humanistic disciplines and in a democratic society surely should. To base a curriculum for aesthetic education on a single conception of aesthetic value would be to nurture a single model for taste and judgment. Clearly, a curriculum so based could not be defended as an essential component for general education in a democratic society because it would not nurture the varioties of experience upon which inquiry, criticism, choice, and responsible action depend. Hence, the curriculum maker for aesthetic education should deliberately insure the presentation of alternative conceptions of aesthetic value.

Identification and Organization of Content

In order to give substance, form, and meaning to goals for a curriculum, relevant illustrative content needs to be identified and organized. To the extent that varieties of aesthetic experience are to be nurtured through a curriculum, one would expect content selections to encompass a range of objects, events, processes, and circumstances which have been or are currently the concern of members of the artistic communities. The problem of identifying possibilities for such content cannot be solved without recourse to some system of categories.

One way to sort and inventory these possibilities is through traditional categories for general forms in the arts such as dance, literature, music, theater, the visual arts, and so on. These distinctions tend to be useful to the degree that one can cite those combinations of qualities which are peculiar to each. These

distinctions continue to be useful to the degree that one can also cite combinations of qualities which are at once particular to a general art form and peculiar to sub-types within the general form--for example, the ballet, ethnic, and modern dance; symphony, chamber, and choral music.

New sub-types which emerge within a general form of art seem to gain their identity through the creation and recognition of new combinations of qualities. As a result, the traditional categories and the sub-type divisions within them have not always proven useful, especially during the last several decades. For example, when Calder created his first mobiles, he had no assurance that his work would become recognized, named, and classified as a special type of sculpture. He had "violated" one of the defining qualities of sculpture, immobility. At present, the works of art which George Seigel is creating seem to fall into the category of sculpture, yet he includes dimensions of the moving image on a flat plane through the use of film. Though we call Seigel's work sculpture, he is creating a new configuration of qualities, a new identity, and a new sub-type of sculpture within this traditional category of the visual arts.

The curriculum maker for aesthetic education would encounter comparable problems of selection and organization of content if he chooses to use such categories as literature, the performing, and the visual arts. Short of a full exposition of the rationale underlying these categories, including the aggregates of qualities subsumed within each, it could be argued that the performing arts are more in the order of events which transpire at given spaces in time, and hence differ in this significant respect from the objects of

literature and the visual arts which can be returned to at will. But it is precisely this argument which contains yet another problem--the claim that both the performing arts and literature can only be experienced in the space of time required to experience them, regardless of whether the literary work can be returned to at will. Nevertheless, if the curriculum maker wished to have students learn how such differences might affect the aesthetic response, then he could and should select and organize content in relation to such categories. In effect, he would select and organize content so that the rationale behind such categories, and its problems, could be apprehended by the students.

The curriculum maker could also choose a possible third group of categories--the performing arts (dance, music, theatre) and the solitary arts (literature and the visual arts). His rationale here would be that the experience from each performance is unique to the extent that it is presented "live," to the extent that the performer is the intervening variable, and to the extent that both the qualities of a performance and the experiencing of it are, in part, a product of the empathic relationship between performer and audience.

A fourth group of categories, different from the art forms themselves, could refer to qualities which can be either perceived in a work of art or perceived and transformed in the very process of creating a work of art. "Sensuous," "formal," "technical," and "expressive" refer to types of qualities that can be discriminated in works of art or manipulated to create them. They are types of qualities we ascribe to objects and events in virtue of the ways they are constructed and the points of view we may bring to them.

Indeed, it could be shown that differing conceptions of aesthetic value seem to arise precisely from differences in the degree of emphasis they place on such qualities and the relationships among them as sources of artistic significance. In addition, these categories can help direct attention to qualities of objects and events that do not fall within the traditional forms of art, thereby extending the range of subject matters that might serve as content for aesthetic education.

While it is possible to demonstrate the usefulness of any of the above categorizations for selecting and organizing content (despite their residual problems) it does appear that the fourth alternative might hold the greatest promise for a variety of fruitful curriculum applications. It could serve just as well for selecting content to draw attention to any single art form as it could for any combination of art forms. It could also serve various approaches to study, insofar as features of experience differ when a person perceives qualities in a work of art or transforms them when he creates one. Indeed, these categories appear most fruitful, if the goals of aesthetic education are to include the apprehension of both common and distinctive features of art forms and objects and events in daily life.

Although all the arts reflect attention to form or structure, the particular qualities of structure in each of the arts and in any single sub-type within a general art form differ in significant ways. The ability to discriminate among various manifestations of sensuous, formal, technical, and expressive qualities would seem to be a fundamental condition for entering into the various modes of

aesthetic experience. On this view, content could and should be selected and organized so that similarities and differences would be demonstrated among qualities in such art forms as the architectural, choral, cinematic, choreographic, instrumental, operatic, orchestral, poetic, theatrical, and the visual.

Approaches to Study

In the light of the preceding discussion, it will now be assumed that there should be at least three major goals for aesthetic education. The first is to help students to perceive a range of aesthetic qualities in objects and events in their life and environment in order to create meanings with them. The second is to help students recognize that the varied configurations among aesthetic qualities which they might perceive or create can give rise to and be accounted for through varied conceptions of aesthetic value. The third is to help students to apprehend meaning in the fact that there are various conceptions of aesthetic value, and draw upon these to transform objects and events in their life and environment.

To these three major goals can be added a fourth: aesthetic education should help students to partake of alternative approaches to the study of objects and events in order to discover the aesthetic dimensions in them. The greater the achievement of this fourth goal, the greater is the likelihood that aesthetic education will have nurtured a continuing search for aesthetic meaning in a variety of contexts and beyond the years of formal schooling. If one were to seek evidence of a person's enjoyment and commitment to the

significance of the aesthetic dimensions of life, it would most likely be found in the scope, intensity, and forms through which his searching and experiencing were manifest. Hence, a fifth goal for aesthetic education is to extend the student's consideration of the aesthetic dimensions of objects and events to the point where the cultural and political implications of them become apparent and are viewed in relation to the conduct of his personal life and his responsibility as an individual in the society.

There are a number of approaches through which objects and events can be studied in order to discover their aesthetic dimensions. A profitable way to conceive of these approaches to study is to examine the practices of artists, critics, and other members of the various artistic communities. For example, one could identify some general principles and characteristics of the ways artists, composers, and performers go about their work in creating an object, performance, or event with aesthetic significance. Such principles and characteristics could then be used to construct models of approaches to study which might lead students to create or perform something with aesthetic significance. Such models can and should be projected in ways that take into explicit account the wide diversity of working styles, concerns, and techniques that artists and performers may use.

The practices of responsible critics in the several arts could also be analysed and constructed into models for studious behavior, because such practices enable critics to discover and interpret aesthetic significance. The kinds of things that these critics seem to attend to, what they say about them, and the methods they use

could suggest approaches to study which might lead students to their own critical insights into the aesthetic significance of an object or event.

Other models for studious behavior which might lead students to create and discover aesthetic value could be projected from analyses of practices, concerns, and techniques employed by other members of the artistic and performing communities--historians, collectors and curators, connoisseurs, cultural anthropologists, and so on. If the curriculum maker were to take this Brunerian "models" route in order to identify, analyse, and define approaches to study in the arts, then any set of practices, concerns, and techniques which lead members of the artistic communities to discover aesthetic value could be taken as a model for studious behavior that might be made available to students. However, the mere fact that numerous possible approaches could become options for choice in no way requires or even suggests that the curriculum maker ought to provide all of them. Indeed, it would be inappropriate if not detrimental for him to try to do so, because multiplicity in approaches to study per se might be obtained only at the expense of other goals for aesthetic education. From educational and purely practical points of view, any curriculum for aesthetic education should provide enough range in approaches to study to demonstrate the existence and availability of options.

PART IV

Alternative Conceptions of Curriculum

This section of the report refers to Conditions 3, 4, and 5 in Part II (pp. 22-25) in order to identify problems in curriculum development which arise from alternative conceptions of the forms that curricula for aesthetic education should take. It identifies some of the vantage points from which levels of curriculum problems can be distinguished. It describes two polar conceptions of the role curricula can play in the teaching-learning process and proposes that a viable conception partakes of each. It also shows how the substantive possibilities discussed in Part III can be transformed into a framework that would permit the development of instructional units.

Curriculum problems can be viewed from different vantage points and levels of concern. The total educational program for a school poses one set of curriculum problems, while the objectives and content for a particular realm of study that supports the total educational program pose another. Within a curriculum framework for a particular realm of study, whether in mathematics, the sciences, or the arts, there should be many options for developing courses of study for students with differing backgrounds of experience and knowledge. Unless courses of study are prescriptive in every detail (as in programmed instruction), the teacher in the classroom is also called upon to make curriculum decisions. In other words, curriculum

can be developed within the constraints of a total educational program for a school; the framework of a discipline or field of study; a particular course of study, usually for a given grade; and curriculum decisions made in the classroom.

In the light of the discussion in Part III, it should be apparent that there are several possible ways of structuring aesthetic subject matters and that choices should be based on educational goals. From this point of view, there is no single or *a priori* "structure of a discipline" which would pre-determine the form of a curriculum for aesthetic education. However, once choices have been made in relation to aesthetic values, categories for aesthetic subject matters, and approaches to study, then the substantive relationships for a curriculum have been established.

If a curriculum framework is to fulfill the conditions suggested in Part III, it should: 1) provide for study in any one of the individual arts or in any combination among them, 2) encompass a range of conceptions of aesthetic value, 3) provide for varied selections of objects and events to serve as illustrative content, 4) organize content selections so that students will best be able to apprehend them to experience their aesthetic meanings, and 5) provide choices among approaches to study based on various models that have been projected from the activities of professionals in the artistic communities.

A curriculum framework fulfilling these requirements should also be coupled with solutions to pervasive educational problems. To achieve this purpose, a viable framework would need to be organized so that its substantive possibilities would be accessible to

students and teachers who have differing backgrounds of knowledge and values. It should also permit the development of courses of study that are compatible with existing curriculum patterns in the schools.

There are two opposing conceptions about the relationships among the curriculum, the teacher, and the student. At one extreme is the argument that all curriculum decisions should be made at the discretion of the teacher in response to events in the classroom. This view holds that the teacher ought to construct a course of study on a day-to-day basis, tailoring it to his estimates of student readiness and motivation. The unfolding course of study presumably would be guided by the teacher's knowledge of a general curriculum framework for aesthetic education. Under such a conception, a considerable amount of expertise on the part of the teacher would be required. The teacher would need to have a background of knowledge that would give him the confidence to simultaneously diagnose student learning problems, develop units of instruction and teaching materials based on these diagnoses, engage in teaching, and assess learning outcomes. He would need to be able to do all of these, while holding in focus the goals of the implicit curriculum framework to which he should be committed. That teachers with such skills are rare in any subject area is all too apparent. Indeed, this condition has helped to create professional specializations in educational testing, curriculum development, and the creation of teaching materials. Clearly, these are not problems for amateurs to solve. Even under the best of circumstances, no single teacher could hope to achieve professional competency in all

of these areas (although it is typically assumed otherwise). Furthermore, one could also argue that teachers should not be permitted to exercise complete autonomy in educational matters, even if they were capable of doing so. From a purely ethical point of view, complete teacher autonomy in educational matters could lead to autocracy and despotism in the classroom as readily as it might encourage democracy and individualism.

The opposite conception of curriculum argues that all decisions should be made by experts apart from any extensive consideration of special events in the classroom or teacher decisions. This view holds that curriculum experts ought to develop complete courses of study, including everything the teacher might require to present them to students. Curriculum packages, so conceived, would prescribe what the teacher and students ought to be doing in the face of almost every predictable classroom contingency. Although textbooks, teaching machines, and instructional television illustrate some of the forms springing from this conception of curriculum, it might also produce more complex and subtle forms. In effect, these curricula and the technology supporting them would be the primary instruments through which teaching and learning would be controlled. Curricula based on prior specifications of what to teach, together with the means of meeting a predictable range of classroom conditions, are based on the assumption that both teachers and students will or should behave in predictable ways. The effectiveness of such curriculum packages also depends upon the degree of expertise of those who design them.

The desirability of such curricula is another matter, and a

decision about them should be made in the light of their ethical implications and the vested interests of those who offer them in the educational market place. Inherent in any "complete curriculum package" are the same difficulties and prospects that are present when individual teachers have complete autonomy in curriculum matters. The demonstrated readiness and ability of industry to capitalize on on the educational market through packaged curricula dramatizes the need for educators to formulate assessment criteria. It also dramatizes the need for educators to formulate and apply such criteria to their own curriculum efforts.

Neither of these two polar conceptions of curriculum are satisfactory. One places full responsibility for decision-making upon the teacher; the other prescribes curriculum to the point where no significant decisions remain with either the teacher or the student. The former conception is vulnerable to the tyranny of the individual, the latter to the tyranny of some group.

A viable conception of curriculum for aesthetic education needs to capitalize on the expertise of specialists who can propose a repertory of aesthetic subject matters for study. It should also provide for choices to be made by teachers and students in the classroom situation. To achieve these purposes, the substantive framework that has been presented needs to be extended to account for different levels of student behavior in relation to aesthetic subject matters and for ways teachers might particularize instruction to meet these differences.

It is a truism that types and levels of student behavior that indicate achievement or progress in learning can only be defined in

terms of the assumed goals and models for performance that the curriculum sets forth. Although the task of identifying types and levels of behavior is primarily an analytical one, it also requires a considerable amount of descriptive data gathered from a range of students with differing backgrounds of knowledge, skills, and attitudes. The analytical task is to clearly identify the contexts to be used in determining whether a pattern of student behavior should be judged appropriate, inappropriate, or appropriate to some degree or in certain respects. Hence, types and levels of student behavior need to be postulated in terms of a particular conception of aesthetic value, clusters of illustrative content, and the component knowledge, skills, and attitudes that would be associated with selected approaches to study. The empirical or descriptive task is to identify the variety of ways in which students might respond to this context in the light of the backgrounds they would bring to it. Such data could be used to develop methods of diagnosing learning problems and to assess the impact of instruction on the students. These methods would be essential for identifying a hierarchy of levels of performance and behavior. Because the data would be gathered in relation to specific educational goals, content, approaches to study, and learner characteristics, they could also provide the basis for determining appropriate points of entry and sequences for units of instruction for particular groups of students.

PART V

A Conception of Curriculum for Aesthetic Education

There is a threefold purpose for this section of the report. The first is to state the requirements of any conception of curriculum for aesthetic education in virtue of the choices and decisions which have been proposed in the foregoing sections. The second is to propose a conception of curriculum for aesthetic education that fulfills these requirements. And the third is to describe research and development tasks that would permit the Aesthetic Education Program to create curricula with their teaching materials and assessment instruments, to subject these to field trial, to demonstrate their feasibility, to prepare teachers to use them, and to disseminate the materials for adoption.

Requirements for Any Conception of Curriculum for Aesthetic Education

Any conception of curriculum for aesthetic education should:

1) provide possibilities for study in any one of the individual art forms (i.e. dance, literature, music, theatre, visual arts), or in any combinations among the art forms (i.e. performing arts, literature, and visual arts, or performing and solitary arts);

2) encompass a range of substantive concepts derived from major conceptions of aesthetic value;

3) provide for selections of content which illustrate the conceptions of aesthetic value, and represent some objects and events which already enjoy aesthetic recognition and some which are contending for such recognition;

4) organize the content selections in ways which will best provide opportunities for students to experience their aesthetic characteristics;

5) provide for a range of approaches to study derived from various models as seen among professionals in the artistic communities;

6) consist of repertories of units for study with the necessary collections of teaching materials from which teachers and students can choose;

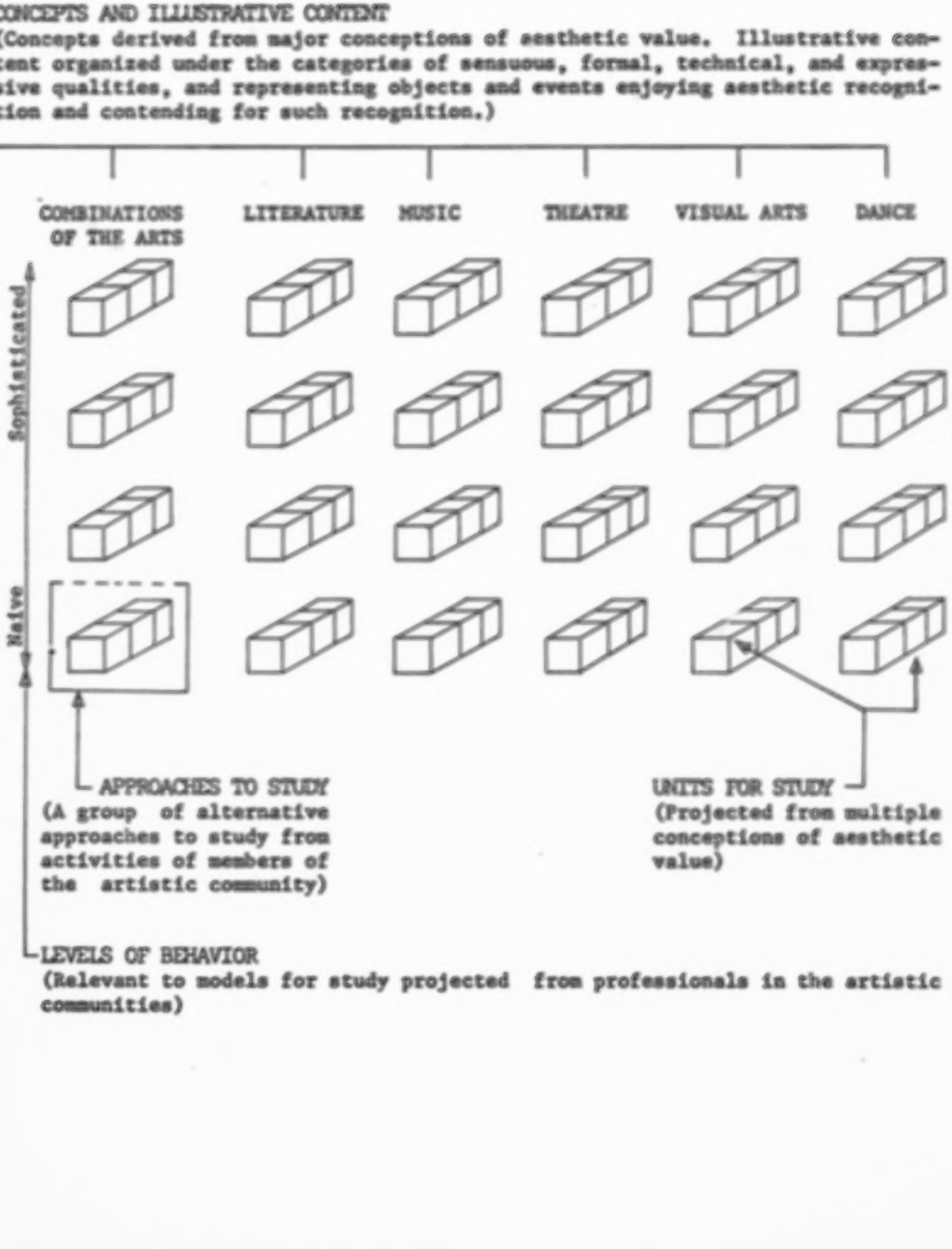
7) arrange the units of study according to levels of student behaviors and provide functional diagnostic and assessment instruments to help guide teachers' and students' selections of units to be studied; and

8) structure the curriculum so that it will be compatible with the general organization of schools in order to insure that it can be adopted, incorporated, staffed, and scheduled.

The Proposed Conception of Curriculum for Aesthetic Education

The diagram on the following page is a schematic representation of the relationships among the components of the proposed conception of curriculum for aesthetic education.

THE PROPOSED CONCEPTION OF CURRICULUM FOR AESTHETIC EDUCATION


CONCEPTS AND ILLUSTRATIVE CONTENT
(Concepts derived from major conceptions of aesthetic value. Illustrative content organized under the categories of sensuous, formal, technical, and expressive qualities, and representing objects and events enjoying aesthetic recognition and contending for such recognition.)
COMBINATIONS OF THE ARTS
LITERATURE
MUSIC
THEATRE
VISUAL ARTS
DANCE
Sophisticated
Naive
APPROACHES TO STUDY
(A group of alternative approaches to study from activities of members of the artistic community)
UNITS FOR STUDY
(Projected from multiple conceptions of aesthetic value)
LEVELS OF BEHAVIOR
(Relevant to models for study projected from professionals in the artistic communities)

All major components of this proposed conception, except for "units for study," have already been explicated in Parts III and IV of the report. The discussion in Part III examined the problems of identifying concepts, illustrative content, and approaches for study. It also indicated the sources to which the curriculum maker would need to go in order to be able to resolve these problems and to create the curriculum components. The discussion in Part IV included attention to levels of behavior, their derivation, and their functions as components of the curriculum. It remains for this section of the report to explicate the nature of units for study.

A unit for study would particularize instruction through a specific learning problem with which the teacher would confront the student. It would include the necessary means to diagnose the student's readiness to confront the problem, and to assess his apprehension of it. The unit would also include the array of teaching materials--references in the forms of photographs, films, readings, recordings, and so forth--to help the teacher provide some of the illustrative content which can assist the student in confronting the learning problem.

Using the illustrative content provided by the unit for study, the teacher would be called upon to help the student to formulate and construct his response to these materials both to find meaning in them and to create meaning with them. Because the learning problem would embody selected conceptions of aesthetic value, the concepts and supporting content would serve as points of entry into aesthetic experience rather than substitutes for the experience.

There might be a single approach to study in a given unit (i.e. criticism), or a unit might be built around more than one approach (i.e. criticism and creative production or performance). The diagram on the following page presents the major components of a learning problem. It identifies the tasks of the teacher and student in relation to the problem.

LEARNING PROBLEM

CONCEPTS
(from Langer in this instance)

Form conveys its own meaning. Some meanings are discovered, created, and conveyed through symbolic devices. Meanings are not exclusively discursive.

TEACHER TASKS	APPROACH TO STUDY	STUDENT TASKS
	Criticism	
	ILLUSTRATIVE CONTENT	
Demonstrates ways that the student can read and listen to poems to find meanings in a metaphor, an analogy, etc.	Poems that utilize symbolic devices--analogy, metaphor--to occasion responses. Referents, feeling-ideas in the poems. Points of view, ways that the poets selected and organized words to create sensuous, formal, technical, and expressive qualities to convey their feeling-ideas.	Listens to and reads poems to discover their meanings and the sources from which they spring.
	APPROACH TO STUDY	
	Making a Poem	
	ILLUSTRATIVE CONTENT	
Helps student search for relevant information about objects or events to identify the beginning of a feeling-idea.	Referent, something about an object or event that the student wants to convey in words.	Searches experience to identify relevant information about an object or event --the beginning of a feeling-idea.
Helps student identify possible points of view and demonstrates how they can be caused to function in organizing words to create feeling-ideas.	Point of view, ways that words can be selected and organized to reveal and give form to feeling-ideas, using such means as analogy, metaphor, alliteration, rhyme, and rhythm.	Experiments with points of view and uses them to select and organize words, thus to transform and create the feeling-idea.

Through the use of diagnosis and assessment techniques, the teacher should be able to determine the level of behavior at which selected concepts could be approached. If, for example, such a conception of curriculum were applied to the elementary school level, a teacher could take a single concept that has been developed for an appropriate level of behavior and then move through a series of units built around different art forms. It would also be possible to individualize instruction to such an extent that students could be directed to those units which were best suited to their particular levels of behavior in relation to selected concepts in various art forms. If a combined arts curriculum were to be developed for the senior high school level, similar diagnostic and assessment devices could function to individualize student studies which were generated out of a central course component.

Techniques for diagnosis and assessment are essential for curriculum decisions in day-to-day teaching because they provide a basis for selecting units of study to suit student differences and for placing units in a sequence for cumulative learning. Although units for study should always be tailored to levels of behavior, further ways of building relationships among units become apparent when components of a learning problem other than levels of complexity are either held constant or are varied. Consider, for example, that a sequence of related units might be generated by examining a selected concept through varied approaches to study and a range of content drawn from a variety of art forms and qualities. This patterning of units could help students to perceive the varied ways that an aesthetic value may manifest itself and to develop

rudimentary skills in each of the several approaches to study. To the extent that these same sources for illustrative content and approaches to study were given sustained attention through another sequence of units organized around a different conception of aesthetic value, cumulative learning should occur.

Sequences of units for study need to be related through sustained attention either to a selected concept, or to an approach to study, or to a body of illustrative content in order to develop sensitivity to the nuances of meaning in the arts. But, sequences also need to be planned to encompass a variety of concepts, a range of illustrative content and approaches to study in order to develop an understanding of the scope of meanings in the arts. Within these two constraints, choices among components which should vary and those which should be held constant can best be made in the light of experience gained through field trials of the units of study.

Research and Development Tasks

In the light of the foregoing conception of curriculum for aesthetic education, the research tasks would be to:

1) Identify and select conceptions of aesthetic value, and delineate supporting concepts pertaining to each;
2) Identify and select content which illustrates the supporting concepts and which is consistent with decisions made about approaches to study and the categories of the arts to be given attention;
3) Identify characteristics of studious behavior among members

of the artistic communities so types of behavior relevant to selected conceptions of aesthetic value and clusters of illustrative content can guide the formulation of behavioral objectives;

4) Identify the variety of ways that students of different levels of maturity and social-cultural backgrounds might respond to the materials in the units of study;

5) Survey the status of research and testing in the arts, including the design of a retrieval system to maintain access to information which is relevant to curriculum development for aesthetic education.

6) Formulate guidelines for the development of units of study.

The development tasks would be to:

1) Develop units of study for curriculum in aesthetic education for specific school populations, including selection of conceptions of aesthetic value with their supporting concepts, and prepare collections of selected illustrative content in terms of identified approaches to study in the selected categories of the arts to serve as teaching materials;

2) Develop instruments to diagnose and assess the students' levels of behavior in order to be able to select units of study in appropriate sequences for given behavior levels;

3) Field trial the units of study with revision as necessary;

4) Develop materials for teacher institutes to explicate the rationale for the curriculum and to enable teachers to use the units of study for instruction;

5) Demonstrate the feasibility of the use of the curriculum materials within the on-going programs in schools and in terms of the functions of the units of study in instruction;

6) Consult with adopters of the curriculum materials; and

7) Disseminate the curriculum materials.

PART VI

A Proposed Course of Action

Certain primary decisions and relevant alternatives would need to be considered in order to move into the program of research and curriculum development for aesthetic education that has been outlined and proposed. The plan for research and curriculum development needs to be specific. It needs to be directed toward a particular school population, and developed within the context of a selected categorization of the arts.

One could logically argue that the elementary school population ought to be the first target level for the proposed research and curriculum development program, because it would tackle the problems of early foundation education. One could argue with equal force that the proposed program should be directed toward the junior high school population, because that is the only level at which some widespread obligatory instruction is provided in any of the arts and taught by teachers who have been educated in the respective arts. An equally powerful argument could be advanced for directing such research and development to the senior high school population because study in the arts, as part of the general education of these students, is restricted to a small percentage of the total school population. One could argue that there is a critical need to extend aesthetic education into these schooling years. The choice among these alternatives seems to be analogous to the chicken and egg

problem. Each of the three schooling levels require simultaneous attention to provide a means for coherence and cumulative learning.

There are two reasons why it would be wise to choose the context of some combination of the arts for initial research and development regardless of the schooling levels. Substantively, attention to some combination of the arts would more readily facilitate coordinated analysis and resolution of conceptual problems as they bear on each of the individual arts. Such analysis could also facilitate research aimed at identifying levels of relevant behaviors and the development of instruments to diagnose and assess them. Therefore, one could justifiably expect that the knowledge and experience gained through such coordinated research and development would not only lead to some significant changes in school practices for aesthetic education, but they would also provide powerful leverage for later curriculum developments in the contexts of the individual arts for any school level. Economically, it is apparent that a program of enormous scope and size would be necessary if each of the arts were taken as its own context for research and development. Even if curriculum development efforts in each of the arts were well coordinated, and the necessary extensive funds were available, it is less likely that such funds could be used efficiently through this kind of a multi-dimension program. Hence, a closely coordinated program directed toward some combination of the arts would lead to a more controlled effort with greater promise.

To further chart the proposed course of action, it is still necessary to choose among the possible combinations of the arts in order to identify the context for the research and curriculum

development. In terms of the discussion in Part III pertaining to the problems and alternatives for organizing content (pp. 32-36), several choices would appear to be equally possible, and there do not seem to be any strong theoretical reasons why one should be favored over the others. However, there is a practical reason which suggests a choice. If a curriculum in some combination of the arts were to be developed, how much depth of inquiry would be possible if attention were directed to the several art forms per se? The risk of superficiality would indeed be great, especially when the prime purpose of such a course would be to enhance the capacity of students to experience the arts.

For this reason, it appears wiser that the categories and the context for the proposed development should be the distinctive features of the arts rather than the art forms themselves. The context should be the sensuous, formal, technical, and expressive qualities that comprise the arts in terms of the alternative conceptions of aesthetic value. The perception and manipulation of these qualities through selected conceptions of aesthetic value should provide a promising avenue to educate toward aesthetic intelligence. This proposed context for the curriculum could contribute to the major goals of aesthetic education to the extent that it would help students to: perceive and create in order to experience the range of aesthetic qualities, perceive and create varied configurations among aesthetic qualities, apprehend the fact that there are alternative conceptions of aesthetic value, and develop ways to study objects and events to discover their aesthetic dimensions. The educational experiences thus provided should develop commitment to the

significance and enjoyment of the aesthetic dimensions of life. To the extent that the sensuous, formal, technical, and expressive qualities could be made to function in the curriculum design, to that extent would the proposed research and curriculum development make the necessary and required contribution to aesthetic education as a component of general education.

The Proposed Plan for Action

It should be apparent that the kind of research and curriculum development program for aesthetic education that is proposed has no parallel in the histories of education in any of the arts. It should also be clear that such a program is long overdue, if aesthetic education is to be taken seriously in school instruction, if it is to have the substantive integrity to produce educational values and command the regard of those in the society who operate at the forefront of aesthetic practice and inquiry, and if it is to provide that component of the general education of all students which will better enable them to attend to the aesthetic dimensions in American life.

At the same time, it should be very obvious that the program is complex, relatively uncharted, and hence requires sustained time and support. If this research and curriculum development is to have substance and power, it requires much work and effort through time before it can produce a range of operational curricula. On these terms, the proposed plan is projected over a period of five years, and it is divided into two phases to provide for the conceptual groundwork, research, development, field trial, teacher education,

and dissemination.

Phase I is projected from October 1967 through March 1969. Its objectives are to: a) produce and publish guidelines for curriculum development in aesthetic education applicable to grades K-12, including the identification of major concepts, approaches to study, behavioral objectives, and alternative solutions to problems of sequence; b) produce and publish an evaluation of behavioral research and assessment instruments in the arts in order to determine the relevance of such information to the curriculum guidelines and to identify the behavioral research that is necessary to accompany curriculum development; and c) produce an indexing and retrieval system that can handle behavioral and developmental knowledge as it pertains to the arts, thereby providing a tool for curriculum development comparable to the curriculum guidelines, and d) operationalize and maintain the system.

The estimated costs for Phase I are $200,000.

Phase II is projected from March 1969 through June 1973. Its objectives are to: a) produce instructional units and curricula for each of the target populations, including the selected concepts, relevant content, approaches to study, and assessment instruments; b) subject the units and curricula to review and field trial; c) revise these accordingly; and d) demonstrate and disseminate the curriculum materials.

Personnel for the unit development teams will be recruited early in 1969. During the summer of 1969, the teams will be organized, oriented, and trained to use the materials produced during Phase I. Specific target populations within the three school levels

will be identified, and unit development will be begun. From September 1969 through May 1970, components of units will be developed, reviewed, and subjected to limited field trial and revised. In June 1970, these components will be subjected to formal review by representative educational specialists in each of the arts, curriculum and assessment experts, philosophers of education, and social critics.

From July 1970 through June 1971, full units of instruction will be developed and subjected to review and field trial. From July 1971 through July 1973, the development of units of study will continue, and alternative curricula will be composed from among the units of study. Completed materials will be demonstrated, used in teacher education institutes, and made available for dissemination.

The estimated costs of Phase II are $2,500,000.

PART VII

Organization

The administration of the proposed plan of action has two important dimensions which are distinct, yet intimately related to each other. One involves the conduct of the research and development activities; the other pertains to relationships between the Aesthetic Education Program and members of the artistic communities, professional educational organizations in the several art fields, community organizations which will have an interest in the developments of the program and whose assistance and support will ultimately be necessary for the success of the program, and the school systems which would appear to be the most interested and the most likely to consider adoption of the curriculum materials that would be developed.

Organization of Research and Development Activities

There are two very difficult and critical problems pertaining to the organization and conduct of the research and development activities which result from a conflict between the demands of the program and circumstances. On one hand, the program requires substantial centralization for many of its functions; on the other hand, much of the talent available in the country to work on the tasks as they are conceived is scattered in different educational institutions and in widely separated geographical locations.

Consequently, the organization of the activities in the program has to achieve a sufficient level of centralization without losing the contributions of important people who would not be willing or able to come to a central location to conduct the necessary work.

In order to bring these conflicting demands and circumstances into functional harmony, the proposed program of research and development activities should be administered through a regional educational laboratory so that it can be centralized to the degree that is essential without forsaking the advantages of the direct involvement of people in other locations through contractual arrangement and working membership on the staff of the program, and through consultations. CEMREL is uniquely prepared to administer and conduct the program. Contractual arrangements should be made for appropriate segments of the work to be done by faculty at their home universities, and a regular program of conferences and staff colloquies should be established for all those who would be working under contract for CEMREL. Indeed, means should be devised for people on contract with the program to function and be considered as regular members of the program.

Relationships with Other Agencies and with Members of the Artistic Communities

The character of the relationships with other agencies, organizations, and members of the artistic communities will surely require modification as the activities proceed in time. At the outset, direct contact should be established with representative members of the artistic communities who are involved in professional work in the several arts, the humanistic tradition, and the organizations of

professional educators in each of the fields of the arts. Such a group of people should be invited to serve as a national advisory committee for consultation, advice, and assistance to help interpret the intention of the program.

In relation to the time table of research and development activities, further relationships should be established with superintendents and members of the boards of education of school systems who would indicate an interest in providing facilities for field trials of the curriculum materials and in possible adoption of them. Simultaneously, relationships should be established with the various cultural agencies in the localities of these schools--art museums, dance, literary, and theatre groups, and symphony orchestras--to seek their support by involving them in the dissemination phases of the program, and by arranging the means for their services to be used in the aesthetic education program as it is implemented in the particular school systems.

Through such a network of relationships, specifically designed to gain the counsel, assistance, and support of selected people and groups, both on the national and local levels, the possibilities for fulfilling the primary purposes of aesthetic education should be substantially enhanced.

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